



Sometimes small changes have a way of growing into something much bigger. This was certainly the case with a small pilot deployment of 27 XO laptops at the Atlas Elementary School in an Afghan refugee community near Islamabad, Pakistan. Before the non-profit OLPC Pakistan brought their XO laptops to Atlas School, the teachers kept order with big sticks, and smiles were seldom seen on the faces of the refugee children.

Within a few short weeks of the XO's arrival, students were happily using their laptops to learn language, math, art, music, and geography. They were even learning English using E-books in their native Pashto language. At the same time, school attendance and student behavior improved. Big sticks were no longer as important as they were before the XOs arrived.

As they became more proficient in the use of the laptops, children cooperated in teaching other children how to use some of the Activities. They even learned to dismantle an XOs and do simple hardware repairs.

"Most students did not previously know their ABC's, however after a week of working with the OLPC [laptop], they began recognizing the alphabets and have started forming small words and can type their names."

But then, the school year ended and disaster struck. The owner of the building where the school was housed, said they could no longer use it for a school. While the principal hopes to find a new location for the school, for now, it has ceased to exist.

Not to be deterred by this setback, OLPC Pakistan has continued with a second pilot school deployment at the Mehfooz Shahid Model School in the Korral Valley, beginning with XOs for all of the eight girls and seven boys in the school's fourth grade class. An additional ten laptops have been placed in the school library where other students can use them and check them out overnight for use at home. More XOs are on order, and plans are to eventually have one for every child in the school.